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ABSTRACT

The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), which arranges for the inspection of all primary and secondary schools in England, uses a model of leadership as part of its comprehensive handbook on inspection. This paper will look at the cultures of a number of effective schools to see to what extent they are congruent with OFSTED expectations and at the role of heads and chairs of governors in bringing these cultures about. The report presents the perspectives of teachers, drawing on teacher interviews collected as part of the Managing for Efficiency and Effectiveness in Primary Schools Project, which began in 1996. In addition to the interviews, teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire that compared schools that were hierarchical and bureaucratic to those where the basis of operation was one of the collegial interaction of autonomous professionals. The text emphasizes the means through which policies were constructed, the basis of decisions, and the relationship between policy planning and practice review. Staff were asked to indicate where on a set of six categories they rated their school currently and where in the same set they felt their ideal school would sit. The 10 questions addressed the nature of current and ideal cultures; the degree of consistency between the current and the ideal; consistency across schools; consistency across subgroups; current culture by subgroup; and other factors. (RJM)

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Creative Leadership and the Culture of Effective Schools:

evidence from English Primary Schools.

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This work is being undertaken as part of the Management for Efficiency and Effectiveness in Primary Schools (MEEPS) Project, and draws on case studies researched by Megan Crawford, Derek Glover and Rosalind Levacic of the Open University and Peter Earley of the University of London Institute of Education, as well as those of the author.

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Introduction

Since the mid-1990s, public policy statements on the subject of effective educational establishments in the United Kingdom have placed particular emphasis on the importance of leadership. The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), which has the responsibility of arranging for the inspection of all primary and secondary schools, sets out a model of leadership as part of the comprehensive handbook on inspection which their inspectors are required to use (OFSTED 1995). The Teacher Training Agency (TTA), now charged with funding all initial and in-service education for school teachers in England and Wales, has taken responsibility for the development of a National Professional Qualification for Headship, which is to be a mandatory requirement for all candidates for headship by 2002 . The government has also charged it with developing a programme of further training for serving heads, and this has been developed in advance of existing plans for "advanced skills teachers" and "subject leaders". Clearly, leadership is seen as the key to effectiveness.

The concept of leadership which both OFSTED and the TTA pursue rests substantially on elements of the school effectiveness literature (see for example, Reynolds et al. 1997; Sammons et al. 1997) Two of the key dimensions effective schools are stated to be professional leadership and shared vision and goals, which are generated in large part by the quality of the leadership. In a public presentation reported in Networks, the newsletter of the British Educational Management and Administration Society for Jan/Feb 1998, the Chief Inspector of Schools Chris Woodhead, who is also the head of OFSTED, stated that the key elements of leadership were

- clear personal vision - what they believe in and expect, and

- the ability to make the rest of the organization feel that they have a stake in this vision and want to contribute towards achieving it.

This will play a key motivating role in the management of the staff of the school.

The TTA view of leadership is similar. Their National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) is a standards-based award, which focuses on both functional management responsibilities for the management of teaching and learning, staff and resources and on strategic management responsibilities. A number of standards have a bearing on leadership, notably the importance of articulating a vision and communicating that vision to colleagues, and creating a culture of cohesion around its achievement.

Unfortunately, "leadership" is not a neutral or uncontested term, as Bryman's (1992) analysis clearly demonstrates. Contemporary articulations of leadership from OFSTED and the TTA rest on quasi-charismatic models which Bryman characterised as "new leadership". However, Bryman follows Weber (1968) in pointing out that charismatic leaders depend on their charisma, their vision, being validated by their followers. This involves the followers in accepting the value-systems of the leaders. Schein (1992) recognised the centrality of this when he stated that "one of the most decisive functions of leadership is the creation, the management and sometimes even the destruction of culture ... the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (1992": 5).

OFSTED and the TTA, however, are short on the processes through which this culture creation is to be effected by the leaders. One model which has attempted to look more deeply into the process in schools, however, is the educative leadership model of Duignan and Macpherson (1992), which

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attempts to establish a philosophical basis for action towards the creation of a culture within which morally acceptable leadership - "good" leadership - can occur. A key dimension of their model is the principle of participation by the staff of a school in the processes of organizational policy making and decision-making, so that professional discretion and ownership are retained. This approach predicates an essentially collegial culture within schools.

If the approaches and underpinning assumptions about good schooling and teacher professionalism of the British government and the school effectiveness agencies are to match up with the moral imperatives of "good" leadership of the educative leadership model, then it follows that effective schools should be collaborative cultures resting on participation and a fundamental principle of autonomous professionals acting in a collegium. There are many problems on sustaining that position, not least of them being the emphasis on hierarchy which underpins the official salary structure of the teaching profession in England and Wales, but it remains the case that in rhetoric at least, collegiality is the preferred management stance of the teaching profession which OFSTED inspects. A study of the cultures of schools deemed effective might be able to provide some evidence on the extent to which effective schools in OFSTED terms are collegial organizations.

The MEEPS Project.

This paper will look at the cultures of a number of effective schools, as perceived by their teachers, to see to what extent they are congruent with OFSTED expectations, and at the role of heads and chairs of governors in bringing these cultures about. It is a pilot study for what is planned as a more substantial survey of effective schools as defined by the official annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. It draws on data

collected as part of the MEEPS project (Managing for Efficiency and Effectiveness in Primary Schools) funded by the Centre for Educational Policy and Management at the Open University, for which fieldwork was carried out in 1997. A word of description of the study is therefore appropriate.

The MEEPS project began in early 1996 as a derivative from an earlier, similar study of secondary schools, reported in Glover et al. (1996a, 1996b) and in Levacic and Glover (1995a, 1995b), and took a similar form. A detailed content analysis was undertaken of 120 OFSTED reports on primary schools[1], which identified the extent to which the schools were judged to be

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[1]Primary education in England and Wales covers the age range 5-11 (years 1 to 6 of compulsory schooling, plus the reception class for "rising fives" who are admitted during the school term prior to their fifth birthday. In addition, some schools also offer nursery provision for children from the age of 3, particularly in urban areas. Only one of the schools reported in this paper provided this, and the nursery operated as a separate sub-unit within the school. Within the primary sector, there are some variants: "infant schools" deal with children up to the age of seven, now also referred to as "key stage 1", and "junior schools" with children from seven to eleven ("key stage 2"). A "primary school" will include both infant and junior age ranges. In addition, some local authorities introduced a move from primary to secondary school at age 12 or even 13, rather than the more usual age 11. Where this happened, the move from "infant" to junior - normally referred to in these areas as "first" and "middle" takes place at age 8 or 9, so that the middle school provides for four years of education. "Infant schools" therefore run from age 5 to 7; "junior schools " from age 7 to 11; "first schools" from 5 to 8 or 9; "middle schools" from 8 or 9 to 12 or

providing good "value for money" and how far this appeared to depend on the senior management following the technicist-rational model of management which was identified in the previous study as being seen as "best practice". This survey is reported in Glover et al. (1997). From this, ten specific primary schools were identified which had been declared to be "sound" or better and providing good "value for money", and eventually nine agreed to take part. Case studies of these schools were carried out during 1997 and early 1998, and reports prepared which were then checked for accuracy with the headteacher and, in most cases, with staff. These reports rested on extensive documentation and interviews with the head, the chair of governors, the financial manager or financial assistant, as many of the teaching staff as possible, and some of the non-teaching staff. The schools were selected to give a range of size and geographical location, and both male and female head teachers. They ranged in size from a two-teacher village school through to an urban school with thirteen staff, a non-teaching head and eleven teaching assistants. The largest number of teaching staff in any case study school was fourteen. Levels of prosperity and social disadvantage also varied widely, with the smallest number of children receiving free school meals (the standard OFSTED measure of social deprivation) being 2% and the largest 68%.

The data collection instrument for this paper.

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13. The nine schools reported in this paper include three first schools. For convenience, and in line with their legal status, all the schools are referred to as primary schools. However, further analysis will be undertaken to see if there are any differences between the "first schools" and the "primary schools".

As well as the interviews, all the teaching staff were asked to complete an anonymous and confidential questionnaire which was returned to the researcher in a sealed envelope. These were then collected for the analysis which forms the bulk of the data discussed in this paper. The questionnaire drew statements from the four ideal-typical descriptions of school cultures presented in the Cambridge Manual of Research Techniques for Mapping Change in Schools (Ainscow et al. 1994). Statements were created which drew comparisons between schools in which the basis of organization was hierarchical and bureaucratic, and those where the basis of operation was one of the collegial interaction of autonomous professionals. In this sense they distinguished broadly between the OFSTED expectations of a technical-rational model and a more collegial and participative approach. However, there was no automatic assumption that the collegial interaction of autonomous professionals was at odds with clear planning and organization: what was addressed was the means through which policies were constructed, the basis of decisions, and the relationship between policy planning and the review of practice. Staff were asked to indicate where on a set of six categories they rated their school *currently*, and where in the same set they felt their *ideal* school would sit. Question one, therefore looked like this:

Q. 1 "The major policy decisions in this school are made by the head and the senior staff, though there is consultation with the rest of the staff sometimes."	C I	C I	C I	C I	C I	C I	"Before major policy decisions are taken, there's a full and free discussion by the whole staff, and attempts are made to get as full agreement as possible."

The ten questions on the questionnaire covered the following elements of school culture:

Q.1 asked how far major policy decisions were the preserve of the head and senior staff, or the result of full discussion and consensus;

Q.2 explored the extent to which the staff was united, "pulling in the same direction", and seeking to socialise new staff into "the way we do things around here" (Bower 1966) or was split into cliques, allowing individuals to work on their own, and where senior staff were distant from the rest.

Q.3 asked if there were clear and unambiguous job specifications, rules and policies, and whether the senior staff took clear responsibility for management, or whether the school ran on the basis of sharing out the work as necessary and where expertise was more important than seniority or office in dealing with problems or tasks.

Q.4 examined whether budgetary control was tight, and whether the primary basis of financial decisions was educational or cost.

Q.5 explored the means of strategic planning and its relevance to daily practice: were long terms aims clearly stated and known to all, and were

plans kept under regular review, or did individuals and groups tend to pursue their own goals and concerns?

Q.6 asked if curriculum plans were worked through by everyone together and rested on consensus, or if they were the responsibility of the curriculum co-ordinator for that area of work, who then handed them down for implementation.

Q.7 followed this up by asking to what extent new curriculum initiatives and changes to practice were mandated by co-ordinators and senior staff, so that individuals kept their ideas to themselves and tried them out within the confines of their own classroom, or whether anyone could put up ideas for consideration, and the school saw a lot of formal and informal discussion of new ideas.

Q.8 asked if responsibility for staff development was vested in a representative group of staff or retained by the headteacher, and whether it was guided entirely by the organizational needs identified in the development plan, or did individual career development needs receive consideration too?

Q.9 explored the extent to which monitoring, review and evaluation was systematic and related to the development plan, or haphazard, and the extent to which the process was organised by senior staff with individuals reporting back to the headteacher on progress towards the targets in their area, as opposed to being left entirely to each individual with no reporting back.

Q.10 asked to what extent teachers shared their routine reflection on practice and sought ideas and inspiration from colleagues. Was the school a "learning organization"?

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In addition, the teachers were asked to place themselves in one of the following categories:

head/deputy head;

class teacher and member of the senior management team;

class teacher and holder of *paid* responsibility (e.g., curriculum co-ordinator)[2]

class teacher and holder of *unpaid* responsibility (e.g., curriculum co-ordinator)

class teacher without additional responsibilities.

This division produced occasional problems: at one of the largest schools, half of the staff were leaving at the end of the school year, and the head had announced that all the staff who were remaining at the school were now to be part of the Central (not, please note, Senior) Management Team. All of these staff, however, categorised themselves as "senior management team", and thereby skewed the balance across the schools of respondents in

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[2]The situation in English and Welsh primary schools since the implementation of the national curriculum is that most teachers who have any experience are likely to have responsibility as "curriculum co-ordinator" for a particular area. However, only a small number of staff are actually given additional points on the salary scale for this work, and these usually take responsibility for the "core" subjects of English, Maths and Science. The co-ordinator for Information technology is also a likely contender for payment. In addition, "pointholders" will often take responsibility for whole-school duties such as assessment policy.

this category. Similarly, another school only had one respondent who was a paid responsibility holder, and this teacher also claimed to be a member of the senior management team. This meant that this category contains no teacher from this school.

The total number of questionnaires was relatively small: 67 in all. The largest single category was that of unpaid responsibility holder, totalling 20. For this reason, initial analysis has concentrated on patterns of distribution of responses to each question rather than on specific numbers, and no attempt has been made to identify statistically significant differences between the various distributions of responses that have been found.

Data presentation and analysis

The initial analysis of the questionnaire data has attempted to establish

1. Teachers' perceptions of their current and ideal school cultures.

2. The degree of consistency between current and ideal cultures.

3. The degree of consistency of perceptions across schools

4. The degree of consistency of perceptions between subgroups

5. The extent to which the expressed statements of the headteachers and deputy headteachers matches those of the other subgroups.

Qq. 1 and 2 will provide evidence of the nature of the culture of effective schools as seen by their members, and the extent to which these schools reflect the professional vision of the ideal primary school culture. Q. 3 explores the extent to which there is apparent support for the view of effective school cultures as expressed by OFSTED and reflected in the School Effectiveness literature, while q.4 explores the extent to which sub-groups

of teachers reflect or differ from the overall views identified. Q.5 asks if it is possible to establish if the visionary role of the headteacher is being exercised in the promotion of a particular sense of an ideal school, and whether their approach is in line with OFSTED, School Effectiveness and/or Educative Leadership models. This last question will also involve our exploring interview data from the case study reports.

1. The nature of current and ideal cultures.

Almost without exception the ideal primary school was seen as possessing a collaborative and collegial, integrative culture, as is shown in fig.1. The statements which they supported most strongly promote the concept of the school in which individuals share problems and discuss ideas openly rather than keeping their professional practice private (q.10), discuss policy concerns and issues freely and openly before decisions are made, (q.1), agree broadly on how things are to be done and socialise newcomers into those practices (q.2), work together on the development plans for each curriculum area, and take decisions on resources and other curriculum concerns by consensus (q.6), and where everyone feels free to make suggestions and offer advice rather than seeing this as the job of those in authority (q.7). In all these questions the modal response was a '6' - as far towards collaboration and integration as possible Only slightly less strongly supported was the idea of staff development being managed by a representative committee and paying attention to individual as well as organizational need, rather than being linked tightly to the organizational development plan and managed by the headteacher (modal score '5'). However, they did not see these characteristics as being achieved at the expense of order: they favoured a school with long-term aims clearly stated in a development plan which guides spending decisions but is kept under constant review, rather than a school in which everyone "did their

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own thing" within their area of responsibility (q.5), and where budgetary decisions are taken on educational rather than purely financial considerations (q.4). They also preferred to see review and evaluation related to clear plans rather than undertaken on a more haphazard basis (q.9).

Only one question did not receive this clear and unambiguous preference for a collegial order. Q.3 looked at the extent to which responsibility rested upon job specification and seniority, or on one's ability to contribute to a situation, as follows:

Q.3	C	C	C	C	C	C	
"Everybody has a precise job specification and there are rules and policies for most things. In this school everybody knows what's what. Senior staff take clear responsibility for managing the school."	I	I	I	I	I	I	"Jobs tend to be shared among the whole staff - rotten jobs as well. Everybody is expected to pitch in as and when it's needed. What you can contribute at the time is more important than seniority or job specification."

The answer to this question is shown in fig. 2. It reveals a clear preference for clarity of role and a senior management which accepts their responsibility to manage the school. There is a much more even distribution of preferences on this question than on any other, and this suggests that the implications of the collegiality they appear to seek in other respects are, perhaps, not fully recognised.

As we can see, and may be expected, the current cultures of these schools do not match the ideal. However, fig 1 demonstrates that overall the ten questions show that the teachers' schools are seen as more collegial and

integrative than they are bureaucratic and technicist. Thus, although they do not achieve their ideal, they are well on the way towards it. Although there is less consistency in the distribution of responses to individual questions for the schools' current cultures than for the teachers' ideal, it remains the case that for seven of the ten questions the modal response was '4' or '5', in five of these seven, the scores of '5 and '4' were the two most frequent, and in the other two questions, the two most frequent responses were '5' and '6'.

It is worthwhile to examine briefly the three other questions not covered in the above summary, and these are demonstrated in figs. 2 to 4. Q.1, which focused on major policy decisions, showed a very narrow distribution of responses to the schools' current culture: its graphical representation is almost a straight line, dipping to its lowest point at category '4'; almost as many respondents rated major policy decisions as being taken by the head and senior staff (categories '1' and '2': 32.8%) as saw them following on full and free discussions among the whole staff and a striving after consensus (categories '5' and '6': 35.8%). Q.4, concerning budgetary decisions, showed a strong tendency to the middle, with categories '3', '5', and '4' being the three most frequently recorded responses, accounting for close to two-thirds of the total (62.8%). It is, once again, Q.3 that sees the one response that stands towards the other end of the spectrum, with 62.8% of the responses falling into categories '2, '3', and '4, and the modal response being '3' (23.8%).

2. Degree of consistency between the current and the ideal.

Overall, as fig. 1 demonstrates, there is a remarkable degree of consistency between the current situation and what is described as the ideal. It is clear that ideally staff would like to see even more collegiality than is currently the case, but it is equally clear that the most commonly recorded evaluation

of the current culture is firmly towards the collegial end of the spectrum. This overall pattern is only deviated from to any extent in Qq.1 and 3: as explained above, Q.1 has a largely straight line representation of the current situation, while its ideal representation is a similar curve to that of the other questions, while Q.3 has already been commented on as producing a response at odds with the general picture for both current and ideal cultures.

Question 3 is the only one on the questionnaire to produce a profile of scores which suggests that respondents' ideal school would be less collegial and more bureaucratic than their current school, as is shown by fig.5. It seems that teachers want to be consulted, and to give their approval to policies and procedures; to share their ideas with colleagues; and to have the opportunity to propose and promote new practices; but that the more flexible structures which can permit such cross-fertilisation and a sense of professional ownership and collective autonomy are disliked: staff should have clear roles and responsibilities, and senior staff should manage the school. Perhaps the teachers in the survey have not recognised the structural implications of the rhetoric of professional collegiality?

3. Consistency across schools.

The responses of individual schools reflect consistently the trends which the overall figures reveal. The ideal cultures show a strong rising trend towards the collegial end of the graph; where there is a difference between some schools and others is that in some cases the line peaks at '5' rather than '6'. These appear to be the smaller schools in the sample. Similarly, individual schools' current cultures receive very similar assessments to those overall: there is a steady rising trend towards the collegial end, with the line peaking at point '5' or, occasionally, point '4'. Only in one case - "Markham" school, which was of middle size within the

sample - does the current culture score highest at '6', and that school shows the closest congruence between current and ideal of all nine surveyed. On the other hand, "Tandbourne" school, a smaller school, shows both a peak at '4' and a rapid fall away thereafter, with no '6' rating at all for any question. This may be the result of its experience in the period surrounding and since the inspection: a new headteacher was appointed immediately prior to the inspection, and has been faced with a serious financial problem as due to the departure of two very large year-groups and their replacement with "normal" intakes, it has reduced in size by about one-quarter in two years. In addition, several long-established staff have left for promotions, and the other staff communicated in the case study a strong sense of rapid change being driven from the top.

One school's assessment of its current culture does stand apart from this trend towards the collegial. "Tudor" school's overall results, alone of all graphs showing aggregate responses for all ten questions on the questionnaire, shows a steady decline in the frequency of responses as we move from the bureaucratic towards the collegial, with a modal score of '2' and the highest '1' of any school. Further investigation of the case study data reveals that the school received a new head shortly after the OFSTED report, and that she disagreed with much of the favourable evaluation given to the school. In that judgement she was supported by advisory and inspectorate staff from the local authority. However, her attempts to introduce changes into the school have led to increasing hostility and resistance among the staff. Whilst their ideal culture is almost exactly identical with the overall survey's results, they see a more bureaucratic and prescriptive management taking effect within the school, suggesting a growing clash between the staff and the head. This will be looked at again below. At this stage, however, it would appear that the OFSTED judgement

that there would be a consistency of school culture and expectation across effective schools is largely borne out by the data.

4. Consistency across subgroups within the data.

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to tick one of the following categories for analysis purposes:

- Head or deputy head;
- Member of the school senior management team;
- Holder of a paid post of administrative, managerial or other responsibility, such as a curriculum co-ordinator;
- Holder of an unpaid post of administrative, managerial or other responsibility, such as a curriculum co-ordinator;
- A teacher with no additional responsibilities outside the classroom.

As for the previous sections, the overall response of each subgroup was plotted for both current and ideal cultures, and each individual question was also analysed along both dimensions.

It should be borne in mind in the discussion that follows that some of the numbers involved are small. One consequence of this is that percentage variations are likely to become exaggerated. This has made it more important to consider the general pattern of each group's response when making comparisons, rather than focusing on detailed scores.

Ideal culture by sub-group.

There is considerable congruence across all the groups' ideal cultures, and they therefore reflect closely the overall pattern of ideal cultures shown in fig. 1 above. However, although the broad pattern is reflected in nine of

the ten questions, in only two (Qq. 5 and 10) is the universal modal score a '6'. Otherwise the pattern is more varied, as is shown in table 1:

Table 1: Ideal culture: modal scores for each question by subgroup:

	Hd/DH	SMT	Pp/hldr	Np/hldr	C/Tch
Q.1	6	5.6	6	6	6
Q.2	5	6	4	6	6
Q.3	3	2.3	6	1	4
Q.4	6	4	6	6	5
Q.5	6	6	6	6	6
Q.6	6	5	5	6	6
Q7	5.6	5	6	6	6
Q.8	2.5.6	5	6	4.5.6	5
Q.9	5.6	5	6	6	5
Q.10	6	6	6	6	6

This table demonstrates the strong tendency towards the collegial end of the spectrum, but points to some interesting contrasts that will be explored further in follow-up work. Leaving aside Q.3 for the moment, we can see that the greatest diversity of modal scores appears in Qq. 8 (staff development policy and practice), 4 (financial decision-making) and 2 (the

degree of unity among the staff, and how far it is important for new staff to fit in). In Q.8 it is clear that a substantial minority of senior staff see staff development as needing to be tied exclusively to the needs of the school as articulated in the development plan, with individuals taking personal responsibility for their personal and career development. Indeed, this question obtained only one unambiguous modal '6' - from postholders currently paid for their additional responsibilities - although it received a substantial minority of '6's from heads/deputies and those not paid for their additional responsibilities. In relation to Qq. 4 and 2, the modal scores remain firmly in the collegial half of the spectrum.

Q.3 once again provides the confusion in the picture. The ideal culture as seen by each subgroup is displayed in fig. 6. The nearly straight line of fig. 5 is now seen to rest on significant variations between groups, which even bearing in mind our caveats about the distortions of small numbers are worth examining more closely. Heads, deputies and senior management team members clearly favour precise job descriptions, clear and comprehensive written rules and policies, and a senior management which takes clear responsibility for managing the school. So do staff who are holding unpaid responsibilities. By comparison, paid responsibility-holders and class teachers without additional responsibilities favour a more collegial, "all hands to the pump" kind of culture, in which expertise is more important than seniority or office. Could this indicate the complexities of "middle management" in primary schools? Perhaps staff who have to carry out curriculum and other responsibilities without receiving additional pay resent these duties and would prefer to see them done by others who are paid to manage, whereas those who are paid have difficulty in persuading their colleagues to follow their lead, or are unwilling to issue instructions and expect colleagues to obey them, and

hanker after a culture in which all are experts, sharing their enthusiasm and knowledge in the interests of all?

Current culture by sub-group

It is at this stage of the analysis that we find the strong trends and consistency of responses start to break down. Only four of the questions show any real consistency across the sub-groups. Q. 2 (the extent to which school is a cohesive culture, with everyone pulling together in the same direction and newcomers fitting in with "the way we do things around here" (Bower 1966)) shows this very strongly, with all sub-groups showing a modal score of '5', while Qq 5 (the importance of planning and keeping the plans under review), 7 (the extent to which curriculum initiatives and changes to practice are imposed by senior management or responsibility holders, or can result from initiatives proposed by anyone regardless of rank or status), and 10 (the degree of shared practice rather than the school operating as a set of autonomous or independent individuals) show broad consistency across four of the sub-groups, with one producing a strongly aberrant pattern. In Q.5 the class teachers produce modal scores of '2' and '3', whereas all other sub-groups score '5' or '6'; for 7, heads and deputies, senior management team members, and unpaid responsibility holders achieve modal scores of '4", whereas class teachers achieve modals of '1' and '5' in a very widely dispersed set of responses and paid postholders concentrate all their responses on either points '3' or '5'. For Q.10, the paid postholders once again produce a switchback profile which stands somewhat at odds with the profile of the other four sub-groups, as fig. 7 shows.

Some discontinuities start to emerge when we look at the answers to other questions. In Q.1 (policymaking by the head and senior staff as against the outcome of full and free whole-staff discussion leading to consensus)

responses show a current modal judgement of '2' (senior management) by heads and deputies, postholders and class teachers, as well as a significant secondary peak from senior management team members; however, heads and senior staff also show a substantial number of respondents seeing the school as making policy through full discussion and consensus. Q.4 (the extent to which budgetary decisions are driven primarily by financial constraints rather than educational priorities) shows a less sharp but still clear divide between the overall perceptions of the more senior and less senior staff, with paid postholders for this question lining up with their less senior colleagues: heads/deputies and senior staff have modals of '5' and '4' respectively, whereas the others have modals of '3' or, for the paid postholders, '2'. This may indicate some frustration among the paid postholders for having responsibilities without the financial discretion which would make them easier to discharge. Q.8 (the extent to which staff development takes account of individual as well as school development needs, and is managed by a representative committee), found heads and deputies seeing the school as leaning towards the whole-school and directive end of the spectrum, while unpaid responsibility-holders cast a very middle way (55% opting for the two midpoint scores '3' or '4', while a further 20% scores the school culture at point '2' on the scale) and class teachers saw their schools as predominantly at level '4'. Against this, senior management teams and paid responsibility-holders produced modal scores of '5'. Q.9 (the extent to which review is organised and systematic, and linked to appraisal), shows a tendency to the midpoint of the scale: the two more senior groups incline tentatively towards the organized and collective (modal score '4'), while unpaid responsibility holders are more certain (modal score '5') and class teachers feel the situation is more individualistic (modal score '3'). Paid responsibility holders produce a

completely scattered response, with modal scores of '1' and '6', closely followed by scores of '2' and '4'.

I have left until last Qq. 3 and 6, as the responses to these questions are more complex. To begin with, table 2 provides the modal scores for these two questions:

Table 2: Current culture: modal scores for questions 3 and 6 by subgroup:

	Hd/DH	SMT	Pp/hldr	Np/hldr	C/Tch
Q.3	3	3,4	6	2,3	5
Q.6	4	5	3	6	1,2

This shows that when the modal scores alone are considered, there is no clear distinction between any level of seniority and the rest of the staff. A study of the two charts in full serves to confirm this. Fig. 8 shows the results for Q.3. Heads and deputies apparently share with their unpaid responsibility holders a belief that their schools show clear responsibilities, rules, and policies and possess senior managements who manage. Their senior management colleagues seem to sit firmly on the fence, with their profile favouring the two mid-point scores! Class teachers, however, see the schools as favouring arrangements in which expertise is more important than office, and where everyone turns to and helps out. Paid responsibility holders show an erratic response.

Q. 6 (fig. 9: the extent to which curriculum development initiatives are imposed or consensually developed) is even more confused. Most heads and deputies, their senior management team colleagues, and their unpaid

postholder colleagues, seē the schools as developing curriculum practice consensually, whereas class teachers are in no doubt that management imposition of new initiatives is the order of the day. Paid responsibility holders' judgements are more in the middle of the range available.

The responses to question 6 give the clearest indication of any in the survey that the possibility that perceptions of current cultures may be as much constructs of what the respondent would like the school to be like as what it is. We shall return to this point shortly. However, it is first appropriate to return to the one school where the overall profile of staff perceptions of the current culture was substantially different from the ideal. Although numbers are very small, it may be that removing them from the sub-groups' figures will create a more consistent set of responses on the nature of current cultures in these effective primary schools.

The impact of Tudor school on the profile of current cultures.

The data from Tudor school were removed from each subgroup and the scores recalculated as percentages. It was surprising to find that although the school's overall judgement of its current culture was substantially different from that of others, showing that it was perceived as bureaucratic rather than collegial, removing the Tudor responses from each subgroup made little difference to the profiles of the subgroup. In only one case - that of the class-teachers' responses to Q.4 (the extent to which financial decisions are driven primarily by budgetary rather than educational priorities) was any major shift of the modal scores found, and it is therefore shown as fig. 10. It will be seen that the result is to move the overall picture strongly towards the educational priority end of the spectrum. This accords with the data in the case study that the school was suffering a major financial crisis, but it is equally the case that

Tandbourne School, which was also facing a major budgetary problems, nevertheless had a modal score of '4' on this question.

5. Heads and deputies vs. the rest: is leadership producing a direction of cultural development?

In terms of the ideal school culture, it has already been pointed out that the different subgroups were largely in accord with each other. It is therefore difficult to deduce from these data that strong leadership has generated these ideals, although it may indeed be so. We shall look shortly at interview data from the case study reports to examine this further. The point has been made that almost without exception the preference is for a collegial and integrative culture, and this is true as much of headteachers and deputy heads as for their colleagues. The only points on which a substantial minority of the heads stands at odds with the consensus favouring a professional collegium are over financial decisions, where some see cost considerations as taking priority, and over stafff development, where some see the organization's needs as being the only consideration which should guide the expenditure of the school's staff development budget.

When we compare the responses of headteachers and deputy heads on the current culture with the overall results, we find very strong congruence on six of the ten questions. In two of the others, the difference is in line with the difference in the ideal cultures just outlined. In Q.3, the apparent difference in pattern is explained by the overall distribution showing almost equal percentages in scores '3' and '4'; the heads show a very high peak in score '3', but no one scored a '4. The two together are almost the same in each case. Only in relation to qq. 1 is there any obvious difference in the pattern, where we find a substantial minority of heads and deputies

claiming for their school a far more collegial policy-making framework than their colleagues appear to acknowledge.

The assessments of current school culture are sufficiently at variance across the sub-groups for it to be difficult to separate the responses of the heads and deputies from those of the others. There is some congruence between the heads and deputies on the one hand, and their senior management team colleagues on the other, in the seven questions which did not show a strong congruence across all subgroups, which suggests some evidence of a distinction between senior and less senior staff, but even this is relatively limited and too much should not be made of it at this stage. Nor is there any evidence that these heads and deputies are tending to view their schools as significantly more collegial than their colleagues do, except in two important areas: they tend to see policy making and financial decision-making as more collegial and participative than their colleagues do.

It would appear, then, that there is substantial similarity between the current situation in these schools and the ideal cultures of the teachers who work in them. However, we have not yet established to what extent these are the result of leadership and the promulgation of a vision, as OFSTED would have us believe, or the result of a broader professional rhetoric about the nature of schools as organizations. It is not impossible, either, that the publication of an official concept of the effective school has encouraged schools which have been deemed effective by their inspectors to adopt the values of the official system. This last question is unfortunately outside the scope of this paper, but we can look to the case study data to see what is said about the role of the head in promoting a particular view of the school's culture.

Evidence from the case study reports.

The case studies reveal very different organisational structures in the schools surveyed, and this is not entirely a function of size. Most of the primary schools examined emphasised the informal: there were close relations between staff members, and the head met everyone every day, so that decisions were often taken "on the hoof". But one school - Elms - was extremely formalised, with strongly hierarchical arrangements for decision-making, an important senior management team, and a head who stated that while people could have their say, she carried the can and made the decisions.

Elms was one of the largest schools in the survey, but this hierarchical structure does not appear to be a necessary response to size. Padingwick was a similar size, with the addition of many more teaching assistants than Elms, yet the approach here was to avoid a senior management team and to take major decisions through open discussion at staff meetings. Job descriptions were less tightly drawn than at Elms, and the plans were far less detailed: whereas Elms had a one year plan, a three year medium-term plan and a follow-up plan for the three years thereafter, Padingwick had a one year plan which was subject to review. However, there was a very clear sense of direction at Padingwick, which derived from the Headteacher's perception of the demands that the school had to meet to serve the best interests of the pupils, and that sense of direction appeared to be shared wholeheartedly by the staff, just as at Elms there was clear support for the structures set in place by the headteacher.

It is easy to attribute such differences to the different visions of the headteacher, and it is clear that the head's stance, personality and philosophy of management was very important. But an additional dimension is introduced by examining the other participants in the subject. It is clear at Elms that a great deal of emphasis was placed upon the

quality of the senior management team as teachers. They were seen as outstanding practitioners by the headteacher and colleagues alike, and so although there was sometimes some resentment at the way that decisions appeared to be handed down, there was confidence that the discussions among the senior management team would almost certainly have raised most of the issues that needed to be examined. Consequently there was confidence and trust in the ability of the senior staff to make sound decisions in the interests of the school as a whole.

Similarly at Padingwick, there was confidence in the staff at the school. It was universally regarded as such a difficult school to work in that everybody needed help at some time, however senior they may formally be, and should not be afraid to ask for it. Further, certain staff were noted for their ability to ensure that decisions taken were implemented fully. Not only that, but the head was noted for acceding to others' suggestions if they could make a good case for them, and for finding the resources to fund them, somehow. Just as the staff at Elms trusted the senior staff to act in the interests of the school as a whole, based on their superb skill as teachers, so staff at Padingwick trusted one another because of the help they gave each other and the support and encouragement forthcoming from the head.

In Hales' (1993) terms, these two schools demonstrate the significance of knowledge power in the creation of an integrated culture of trust and rapport. Padingwick reveals another dimension of power which was potentially available to headteachers: the power to appoint staff. Padingwick's headteacher had appointed over thirty teachers to the school in his four years in post: teachers either survived and stayed or failed to cope and moved on quickly. Part of the survival was recognising that the classroom was not a private place (Lieberman and Miller 1984) but a part of a very open whole. Because Padingwick operated on the assumption that

everyone needed help and shouldn't be afraid to ask for it, and because staff turnover was so high, those who stayed sustained and strengthened the collaborative model of teaching and taking decisions. Resource power was very important at Padingwick.

At Elms and Padingwick, the headteacher was in post shortly before the inspection by OFSTED. At Tudor, the head was appointed after the inspection and found herself facing a situation in which many critical judgements about the school had been played down in the final inspection report, so that there was more to be done than the staff might acknowledge. This was followed on by a major financial crisis within six months of her taking office, which led to the possibility of two redundancies. The result of this was a situation in which a cohesive school which believed it was doing well fragmented (Meyerson and Martin 1987) into three distinct cultures: the head and the chair of governors, who acknowledged the need to change practice and raise achievement levels, the senior management team, who agreed with the need but did not themselves promote it, and the rest of the staff, who resented the changes being promoted and harked back to a "golden age" prior to the head's appointment: one teacher stated that before the current head came the school had been "almost perfect". Most of the staff had been in post for at least six years; the previous head had retired after 15 years in post; the challenge to the apparently official judgement that the school was providing as good education and getting good results was taken as criticism, and the threat to two jobs compounded the difficulty. The head at Tudor was cast in the role of change agent with no power resources at her disposal to assist her in her task. The cards were stacked against her from the outset.

Two of the other schools provided examples of recently appointed headteachers, and one - Tandbourne - provided similar circumstances to

Tudor. Here, however, the head was appointed shortly before the inspection, and the moves he made to put in place the procedures and structures recommended by OFSTED earned the school a good report. the departure of two well-established and senior members of staff strengthened his position against staff who might otherwise have opposed him. However, Tandbourne is also a small school - 80 children and 4.6 full-time equivalent members of staff - and the head is a teaching head who is therefore working alongside his staff in the classroom. He is therefore able to call upon professional knowledge power; he raised the money to carry out several small but important building projects by grappling with some of the arcane financial regulations which surround church schools which operate on behalf of the local authority ("aided" schools), which generated administrative technical knowledge power; and he was able to promote one of the two full-time teachers who was left after the others left the school, while relieving the other of some of her unpaid duties.

We have looked so far at schools which had seen relatively recent new appointments of headteachers. Most of our schools in fact fell into this category. However, two of them, both smaller village schools like Tandbourne, had long-serving headteachers. Both Bromwood and Stonvill were described by their staff as teams, in which the head provided leadership and operated informally. Much decision-making was undertaken "on the hoof" in passing conversations in the corridor or classroom: the staff saw their job as teaching, and the heads also presented management activities as a distraction from their primary task of teaching the children. With stable staffs, many of whom had served as long as they had at the school, these heads had been able to generate an almost family culture in which management was seen as a protective activity designed to enable the teachers to teach. This is not to say that issues were not debated: they were, and both heads talked over problems and were seen as active

listeners by their staff. However, one case study reports that many discussions were "deferential", confirming the head's perception that he was "a collegial leader who has to make decisions that might be unpopular", while the other was reported to "talk over problems, listen, and then do what he thinks best." This head also sees himself as collegial, and staff are content to leave decisions outside the classroom and curriculum to him: it is the payoff for an element of discretion in their professional activity.

Discussion and conclusion

This discussion suggests that the character of ideal school cultures is not in itself generated by the headteacher, but that the current culture is essentially a negotiated arrangement between all the partied to the organisation which reflects the distribution of power arrangements. All the schools which have been described briefly in this last section produced very similar statements of the ideal school in the questionnaires their staffs returned, but the schools were very different structurally. Further, there is reason in the light of the case study data to question how far the judgements made by the staffs concur: does a modal score of '3' to a question from staff in each of two different schools imply that the degree of collegiality of bureaucratic management is comparable? Almost certainly not. What it does imply, however, is that the respondent's sense of how far a school can go towards operating as a collegium of autonomous professionals is shaped by the circumstances in which they work, and their perception of the past. If headteachers are to act as visionary leaders, as OFSTED and the Teacher Training Agency wish, they must attend to the distribution of power resources in the school and work with the people who possess them to promote the integrative culture which appears to characterise these successful schools. The principles of educative

leadership (Duignan and Macpherson 1992) would seem to have considerable potential for them.

This paper began by examining survey data on the staffs' perception of the culture of effective schools. It then sought further information from the case study reports of the schools whose staffs completed the questionnaire, in the hope of establishing the extent to which schools' ideal and current cultures were influenced by the leadership of the head, as is expected by OFSTED and the Teacher Training Agency. it is clear that to make sense of these data, we need to work on more than just the culture of the organization or its decision-making arrangements. The concept of power has proven useful in the later discussion, and it is clear that the three-fold model of organizations developed by Bennett and Harris (1997) may have considerable potential for interrogating these data. This model suggests that power, as conceptualised by Hales (1993), provides a dynamic for unravelling the nature of decision-making structures and the dominant values which underpin the cultures, current and ideal, of an organization. But that analysis must be done elsewhere.

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Fig. 1: Current and Ideal Responses: all questions

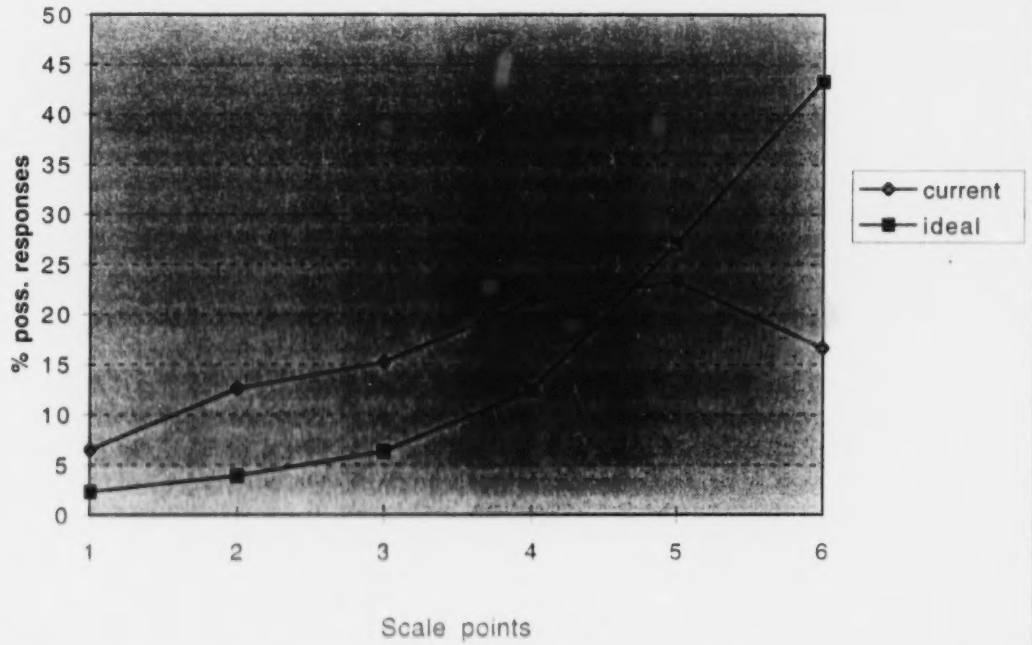

Fig.2: Current and Ideal Cultures, Q3

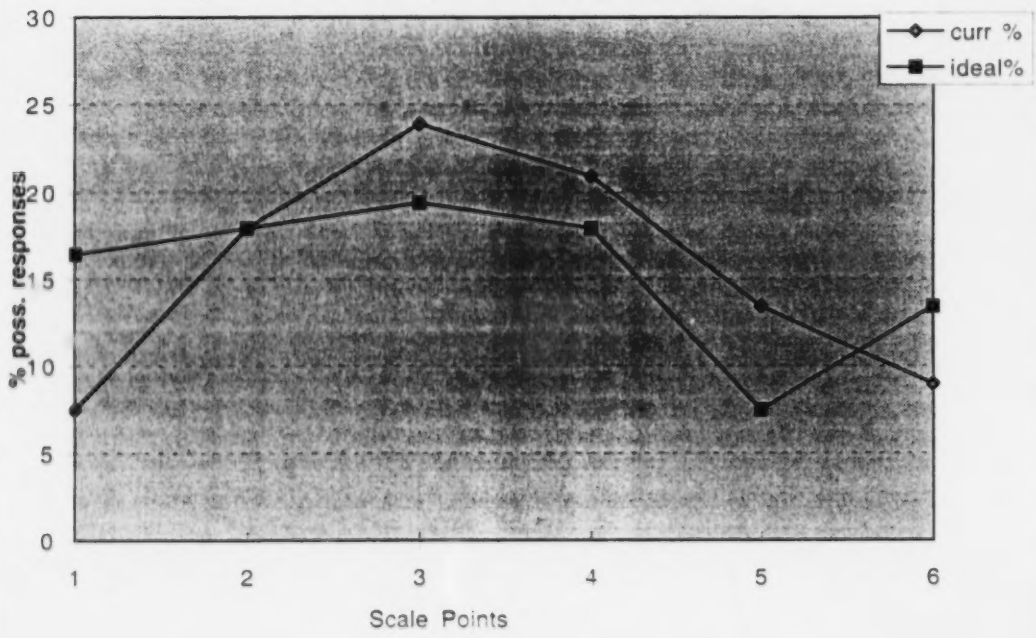

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Fig. 3 Current and ideal cultures: Q1

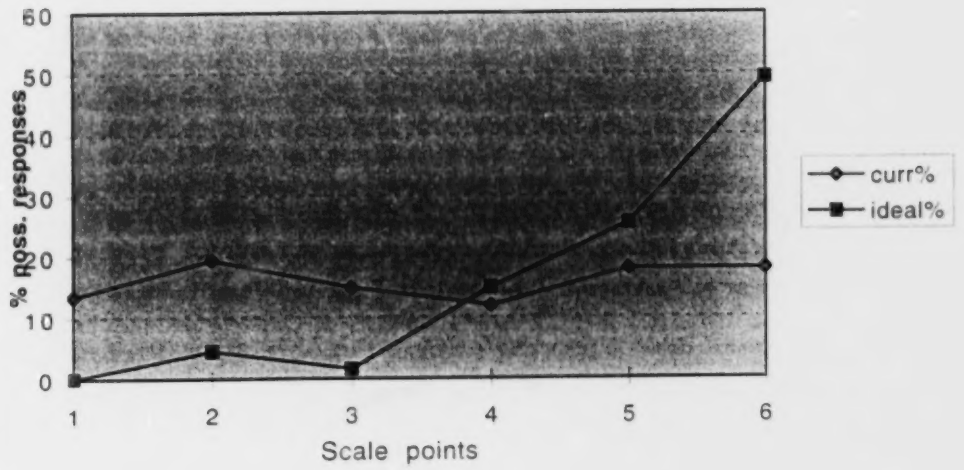

Fig. 4: Current and ideal cultures: Q4

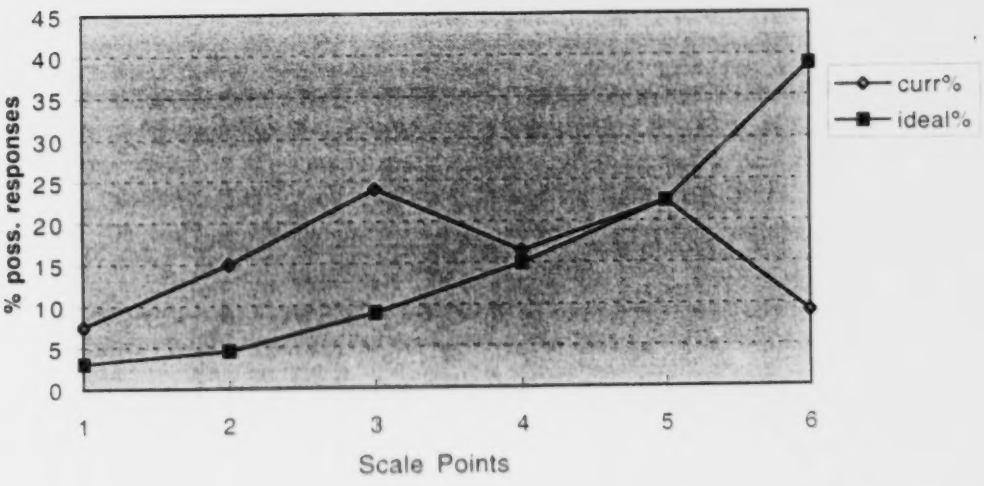

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Fig. 5: TUDOR CURRENT/IDEAL

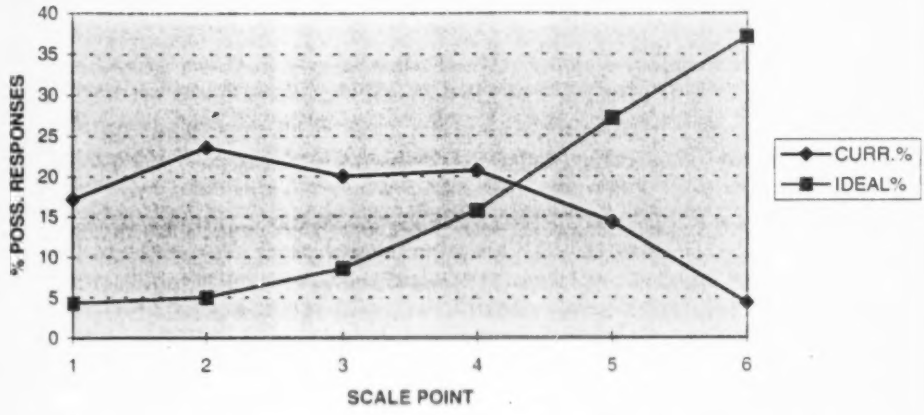

Fig. 6: IDEAL CULTURE BY SUBGROUP Q.3

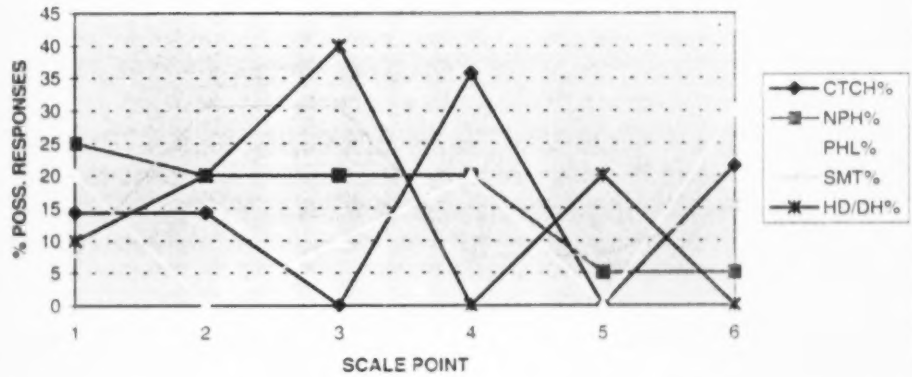

Fig. 7: CURRENT CULTURE BY SUB-GROUP Q.10

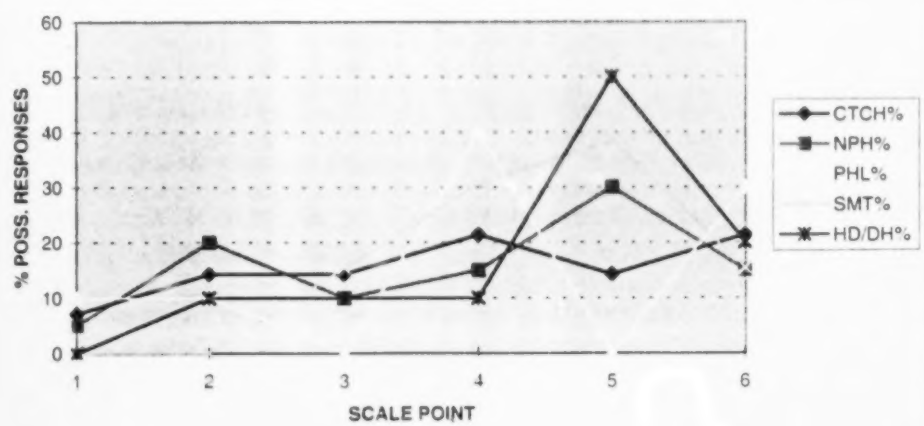

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Fig. 8: CURRENT CULTURE BY SUB-GROUP Q.3

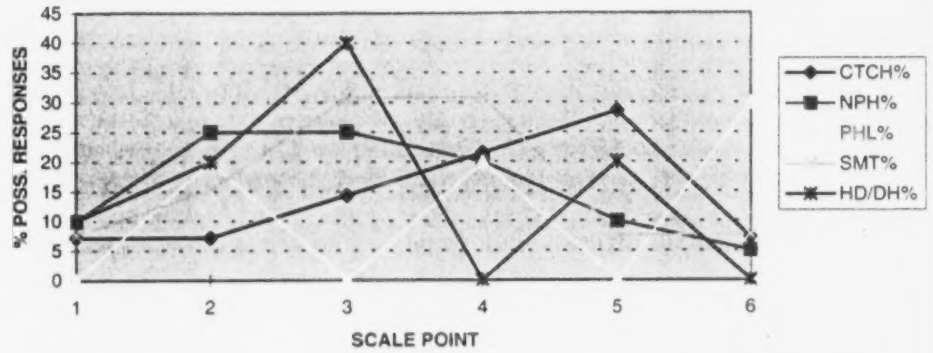


Fig. 9: CURRENT CULTURE BY SUB-GROUP Q.6

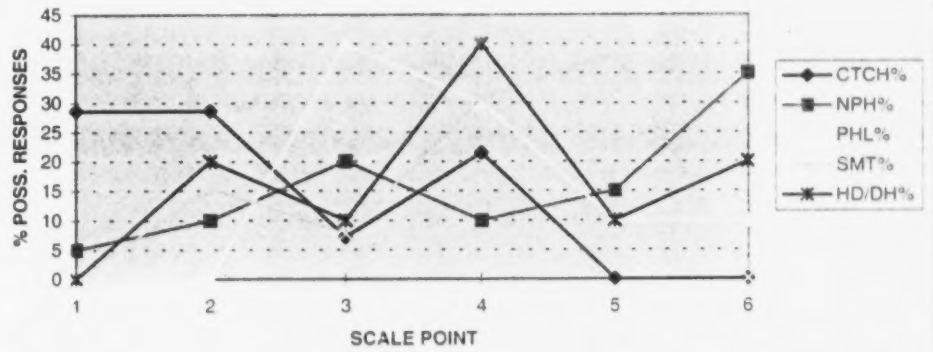
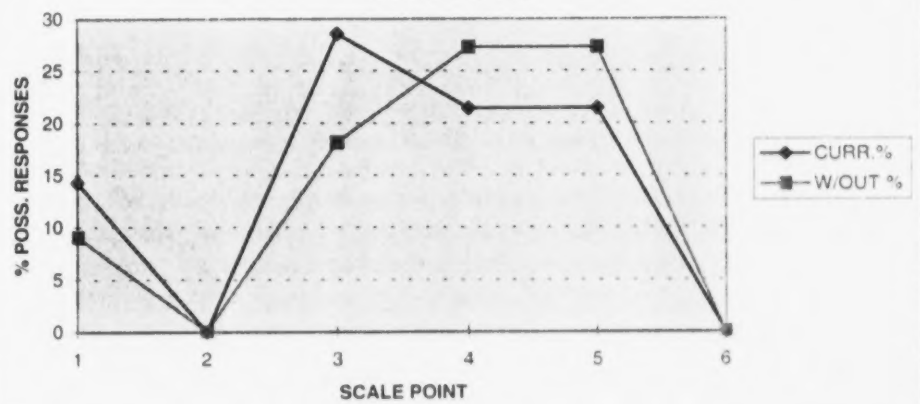


Fig.10: Question 4 classteacher response: with and without Tudor School



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